

Just Festival Conversations, The Quaker Meeting House, throughout August at 19.30

The Edinburgh Fringe Festival is incredible, with its open-access approach to programming emphasising the importance of giving absolutely everyone the chance to perform, to make people laugh, tell their story and express themselves. But what if you can't get on the stage? A study in 2015 found that only 53% of Fringe venues were wheelchair accessible. So if you think being part of the audience is difficult to those of us with disabilities, imagine what performing must be like? Certainly, things are moving in the right direction with the Fringe Festival looking to improve access issues year on year, but there is still more that can be done to ensure everyone is let on stage. Just Festival will give a voice to those who have experienced first-hand the barriers to performance, and those that are fighting to bring them down.

The conversation will be chaired by Dr Sally Witcher OBE, and she will be joined by George Low (University of Edinburgh) who is currently researching factors that disabled people encounter early in life that discourage them from performance, Pete Sparkes from Drake Music Scotland, Lyndsey Mclean (Access officer, Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society) and Sasha Callaghan from Disability History Scotland who will be bringing their own play to the Fringe this year. This panel represents views from across the Edinburgh Festivals and will not only address how those three weeks in August can become more accessible but what needs to be changed from the ground up to make performance possible for everyone.

The Just Festival conversation programme has been the backbone of Just Festival for many years, offering a relaxed, safe space in which experts, practitioners, community organisations, performers and the public can gather to discuss, debate and dissect the issues that face us as local and global communities. Join us this year as we explore what it means to go Against The Current, from religious leadership to mental health we ask what it will take to challenge the status quo and make the world a fairer and more united place.

Let Me On Stage takes place on the 9th August at 19:30 at The Quaker Meeting House and is one of ten conversations at Just Festival throughout August

-END-

Just Festival - just-festival.org | [@justFestival](https://twitter.com/justFestival) | [#AgainstTheCurrent](https://twitter.com/justFestival)

Contact: James@Just-Festival.org